

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-17, 19-21, and 23-31 are pending after the amendments. Claims 7, 8, 18, and 22 are being cancelled by the present amendments. (Note that claims previously cancelled in the September 18, 2007 amendment are not cancelled herein because that September 18 amendment was not entered by the PTO.)

Claim 7 has been merged into the independent Claims 1 and 20, so Claims 1 and 20 now are directed to a gaming machine with two screens displaying two different games, where a special symbol from a first array of symbols on a first display screen is shifted into a second array of symbols on a second display screen. This is also supported on page 6, lines 14-16, Fig. 1, and by the context of the remainder of the specification.

The game of Claims 1 and 20 provides many new possibilities for the game designer, since the game played on the second display screen is not the same game played on the first display screen, even though both games involve arrays of randomly selected symbols. The “special symbol” achieved in the first game on the first display screen may have a certain significance when in the first game and a different significance when in the second game on the second display screen. So there is synergy in the two games being played on different screens.

Since Claim 7 has been merged into the independent claims, the rejection of Claim 7 (now cancelled) in the final Office Action is the pertinent rejection.

In the final Office Action, the examiner rejected Claim 7 (merged into Claims 1 and 20) as being obvious over Visocnik (US 2004/0048646) in view of Rodgers (US 7,090,580). Visocnik disclosed a moving wild card (e.g., a mouse) that moves around the same screen for each game in a free game session. Rodgers discloses a slot machine with an upper and lower display (Fig. 1B), where different games can be played on each screen (col. 10, lines 23-30).

The examiner stated that it would have been obvious to display Applicant’s “first game” on one screen and the “second game” on a different screen, “thereby providing a dedicated screen for the player to concentrate on for each of the first and second games.”

The invention in Rodgers is the holding of a reel that displays a wild card so the wild card remains in position for a subsequent game when the other reels are rotated. Since the key aspect of Rodgers is that the wild card stays stationary, there is no suggestion by Rodgers' wild card game to modify Visocnik to use two screens and shift Visocnik's wild card mouse to a second screen.

The examiner is essentially saying that it would be obvious, due to Rodgers' teaching of two screens, to modify Visocnik to have two screens to play different games on both screens. Even if this were true, there must also be a suggestion to have the games on both screens interact and have a special symbol in a first array on one screen (e.g., Visocnik's mouse) move to a position in a second array on a different screen. There is no suggestion for this by the combination.

Typically, a second screen in a slot machine either displays a static display (to advertise the game), a bonus game, or some other "feature" game that is independent of the main game played on the first screen once the main game initiates the game on the second screen. In Applicant's Claims 1 and 20, the games being played on the first and second screens are games where arrays of symbols are randomly selected, and the games interact by a symbol on one screen being shifted into the game played on the other screen. This creates many new game possibilities and is respectfully submitted to be non-obvious. In the thousands of video slot machine games on the market, Applicant's have yet to see such a game where two similar symbol array games interact by symbols shifting between screens.

There is no suggestion by Rodgers for such interaction between "symbol array" games on two screens.

Accordingly, all claims are respectfully submitted to be allowable.

If the examiner has any questions or would like further clarification of the claims, the examiner is requested to call Applicant's attorney at 408-382-0480 x202.

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/Brian D Ogonowsky/
Attorney for Applicant(s)

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Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian D Ogonowsky/
Brian D. Ogonowsky
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 31,988

Patent Law Group LLP
2635 N. First St.
Suite 223
San Jose, CA 95134
Tel (408) 382-0480 x202
Fax (408) 382-0481